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PROGRAM Nightwatch

STATION WDVM-TV  
CBS Network

DATE April 25, 1983 2:30 A.M. CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT Reagan's Topic: Cuba and Nicaragua

MARY JO WEST: Central America will be the topic when the President makes a rare speech before a joint session of Congress on Wednesday. He thinks Cuba and Nicaragua threaten the stability of the region.

Congressman Clarence Long flew to El Salvador on Sunday. His subcommittee votes Tuesday on a Reagan request for more military aid for that country.

Five other congressmen are in Honduras today, guests of the CIA.

Charles Gomez reports.

CHARLES GOMEZ: The congressmen arrived in Tegucigalpa on their CIA-orchestrated tour and were taken to an off-limits military section of the airport, far away from the American press. The purpose of the tour is to bring some members of the House Intelligence Committee to Honduras to convince them that CIA involvement with counterrevolutionaries falls within congressionally-approved guidelines and is not in violation of U.S. law.

The congressmen were whisked to the U.S. Ambassador's residence for private briefings with CIA and Honduran officials, but were not taken to the border, as previously planned, where they were to have been shown the scope of CIA involvement with the counterrevolutionaries.

Under U.S. law, the CIA is allowed to help the counter-revolutionaries if the sole purpose is to stop the flow of arms from Nicaragua to the leftist rebels in El Salvador. But the CIA

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has been charged with changing its role from token assistance to daily direction of the counterrevolutionaries, who say they are fighting to topple Nicaragua's Sandinista regime. The CIA is forbidden from using government funds to overthrow the Nicaraguan government.

The CIA is asking Congress for an additional \$20 million to continue its operation here into 1984.

The House Intelligence Committee's concern about the CIA's covert activities here is prompting some congressmen to call for proposals which would reduce or cut off funding for the CIA's operation with the counterrevolutionaries altogether.